Capacitar at the US/Mexico Border—Patricia Mathes Cane, PhD, Capacitar Founder/Director

With the current debate about US immigration policies and reforms, Capacitar is committed to work with groups who focus on human rights of refugees and immigrants, people traumatized by border issues, as well as communities impacted by drug cartel violence. To further this work we recently initiated a Capacitar Border Network that includes persons who have participated in trainings and who are using Capacitar in their outreach along the US/Mexico border. The network includes people from 4 states (Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and California) along with partners in Mexico (Juarez, Reynoso, Chihuahua, Saltillo, Oaxaca, Nogales and Tijuana). New bi-national trainings and workshops are planned as well as trauma healing trainings for human rights leaders and families of the disappeared from Chihuahua, Saltillo and other parts of Mexico.

Capacitar participants have brought much creativity and talent to their work in border communities. In January, over 60 men and women completed the 4-module Multicultural Wellness Trainings in El Paso and Ciudad Juarez. Their final reports described significant applications of Capacitar methods with a broad cross-section of groups. Participants created netmaps of their outreach showing how they had multiplied Capacitar with over 5,460 individuals in their organizations and communities.

To view interviews filmed by Taran Collis at the El Paso and Juarez trainings follow the Capacitar International link on YouTube.

Capacitar teaches simple practices of healing, team building and self-development to awaken people to their own source of strength and wisdom so they can reach out to heal injustice, work for peace and transform themselves, their families and communities. Using a popular education approach, Capacitar has worked with grassroots people in over 40 countries.
During the last seven years, over 50,000 people have been killed in Mexican drug cartel-related violence, and since 2001 over 2100 people have died attempting to cross the border. Thousands of others live as internal refugees in Mexico or have fled to the US to escape kidnappings, extortion and daily violence. Capacitar continues to walk in solidarity with groups along the border and in the future will collaborate with human rights organizations and families of the disappeared in other parts of Mexico. The following articles describe some of the applications of Capacitar in different border communities.

Centro San Vicente, El Paso—Sr. Suzanne Anglim, DC

With the cartel and drug war violence, the lives of many at the border have been painfully affected by kidnappings, torture and killings. The patients and associates of Centro San Vicente Clinics were not spared. Our health system currently serves over 65,000 people per year. Koryna Hererra is a counselor at San Vicente Clinic and uses Capacitar in the Mental Health Counseling Center. Ana Rodriguez RN applies the work as a psychiatric nurse at our homeless clinic. The leadership of our three health care centers has been very supportive of our relationship with Capacitar and we hope to integrate Capacitar practices throughout the culture of our system. Centro San Vicente will again host the El Paso Capacitar training in 2014-2015.

San Diego/Tijuana & Southern California Networks

Capacitar networks are being coordinated by Monica Santos in the San Diego/Tijuana area and by Ree Taylor in the Southern California area. Gatherings, community workshops, rituals, and days of practice, study and support will be offered by both groups, as well as outreach and collaboration with other Capacitar border networks. Members of both groups recently traveled to Nogales and Tucson to participate in the border workshops and to share ideas and experiences with people in these areas.

Nogales/Tucson Workshops

Capacitar recently offered workshops in Nogales, Mexico, and Tucson, Arizona, coordinated by Mennonite minister Tina Schlabach and sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee. The Nogales workshops at HEPAC (Hogar de Esperanza y Paz) offered self-care practices for staff working with migrants, youth and women’s groups along with tools for organizations focused on justice for migrants, human rights and border issues. In Tucson participants came to learn skills for self-care and outreach as they work with migrants and refugees, persons in detention, justice issues, persons stranded in the desert while crossing the border, and women and children dealing with trafficking and border violence.
With Capacitar’s popular education approach to healing, training participants are encouraged to multiply what they learn with their families, organizations and communities. Three women from the Office of Human Rights and Families of the Disappeared in Saltillo, Mexico, multiplied Capacitar practices with over 700 people in 2013. They taught many groups including: migrants who had suffered human rights abuse, children in schools and parishes, those who have lost family members in the cartel violence, the tortured, parish groups, leaders who work with women in the barrios and their own staff and colleagues.

At the January Module 4 trainings in El Paso and Juarez, the 60 men and women who completed the course reported that they had multiplied the Capacitar practices with over 5,460 persons at 3 different levels. For some, the practices were used basically in their personal lives. Others incorporated the practices in their groups for self-care, while others integrated Capacitar practices in their organizational culture and community outreach. The practices were applied to many different populations representing over 30 organizations and agencies including: NGOs, parish and community youth groups, pregnancy groups, adolescents, seniors, women’s groups, children with disabilities, offices of human rights, families of the disappeared, diabetes and weight-control groups, therapy clients, health clinics, church groups, migrant and refugee groups, jails and detention centers, homeless shelters, spiritual accompaniment programs, nursing students, school of social work, recovery groups, hospice and caregivers, family and friends. As one woman working in an office of human rights said: “Capacitar has been invaluable to us. We are grateful for the practices that help us to live and work in a society impacted by corruption and violence and that empower us to become an oasis of healing in the community.”

Netmapping Outreach

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Capacitar in Family Services and Social Work—Janine Laskowski Gallinar, LCSW

I began working with Capacitar en La Frontera in 2010 and have endeavored to implement Capacitar in my personal and professional life. I work part time as a clinical therapist at a local nonprofit mental health agency, Family Service of El Paso (FSEP), and as a clinical lecturer for the Department of Social Work at the University of Texas El Paso (UTEP).

In my work as a therapist at FSEP, I have been fortunate to have the support from our executive director to make Capacitar part of the culture at our agency. We provide training to support staff, student and professional interns and licensed therapists. The response has been very positive as therapists report using the techniques with clients on an individual basis, with families and with couples. They have also referred clients to a Capacitar group we host at FSEP. In 2013 we started a support group for the seriously mentally ill (SMI) population that meets weekly for one hour. In every session we practice Capacitar skills with the group focused on recovery and wellness. Capacitar practices complement our goal to improve coping skills, improve the quality of life of our clients and address symptoms related to one’s mental health diagnosis. Many of our clients suffer from trauma and depressive-related disorders and the regular practice of Capacitar skills has been instrumental in their healing process. Another benefit to practicing Capacitar with our SMI group has been how the model complements our psychoeducational efforts to increase clients awareness of the mind-body-spirit connection. The most telling evidence comes from the clients themselves and the examples they share of how the practices have helped them in times of panic or to remain in the present moment.

As a clinical lecturer at UTEP, I have been able to incorporate Capacitar in the classes I instruct. In social work education we adhere to the professions code of ethics to use evidenced based practices (EBP) with our clients and teach EBP models to social work students. Capacitar offers an EBP model that is well researched, yet simple to grasp and implement. Students are encouraged to use the practices for their own self care as developing professionals, as well as with clients in their internships and as helping professionals after graduation.

Workshop led by Janine Gallinar, LCSW, at Family Service of El Paso
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Dear Friends,

Greetings to you this Springtime! This has been a busy year so far for Capacitar as we reach out to meet the needs of groups in places of violence, poverty and disaster. Special Projects Coordinator Joan Condon just returned from work in Haiti where people are still dealing with the aftermath of the earthquake and hurricane, as well as extreme poverty and community violence. A few weeks ago I was in Nogales, Mexico, and Tucson, Arizona, offering workshops to groups focused on healing border violence and migrant needs. In early April, I will travel to Japan for three weeks for team formation and workshops with Fukushima evacuees, those still living in temporary housing in tsunami areas, caregivers for the elderly impacted by the tsunami, mothers whose children have cancer, and groups working with domestic violence. And in July, we will make an assessment visit to Afghanistan to work with communities traumatized by years of war and violence.

As Capacitar continues to respond to requests for workshops and trainings, your support will empower us to do that. Your donation will make possible:

- Multicultural Wellness Trainings in 15 countries in the US, Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East
- Work with Latino caregivers and health promoters in US/Mexico border communities and with refugee groups
- Trauma Healing & Leadership Trainings in Rwanda, Uganda, DR Congo, South Sudan, Kenya, East Timor & Indonesia
- Outreach to refugee communities and detention camps through Capacitar en la Frontera
- Trauma Healing Trainings for survivors of the earthquakes in Haiti and in Japan
- Translation and development of teaching materials in different languages.

You are an important part of our Capacitar global family and network and we cannot do this work without you! We are deeply grateful for your generous donations and prayerful support. Together we are committed to the mission of healing ourselves and healing our world.

In peace and solidarity,

Pat Cane
Capacitar International Founder/Director